

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 TUNIS 06066 311013Z

14

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 IO-13 OMB-01 DLOS-06 SAL-01 ACDA-07 /105 W

----- 050732

R 310911Z AUG 76

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3996

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

INFO AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY ROME

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 6066

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR TS LY AG

SUBJECT: POSSIBLE ALGERIAN ROLE IN TUNISIAN-LIBYAN

CONTINENTAL SHELF ACCORD

REF: TUNIS 5973; TUNIS 5964

1. NORMALLY RELIABLE SOURCE WITH EXCELLENT ACCESS TO
POLICY LEVEL OFFICIALS IN ALL MAGHREB COUNTRIES HAS
ADVISED US THAT ALGERIAN PRESIDENT BOUMEDIENE PROBABLY
PLAYED DECISIVE ROLE IN GETTING LIBYAN LEADER QUDHAFI
TO AGREE IN REFERRAL OF TUNISIAN-LIBYAN CONTINENTAL
SHELF DISPUTE TO INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE IN THE
HAGUE FOR SETTLEMENT. ACCORDING TO THIS SOURCE, QADHAFI
WAS PERSONALLY NEGATIVE ON QUESTION OF ACCOMMODATING
TUNISIAN DESIRE TO DELINEATE CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY
IN GULF OF GABES THAT MIGHT PERMIT GOT TO EXPLOIT
PROMISING PETROLEUM RESERVES IN THE REGION. QADHAFI
REPORTEDLY TOLD OOT FOREIGN MINISTRY CHATTY DURING A
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TUNIS 06066 311013Z

BILATERAL MEETING AT THE COLOMBO NAM SUMMIT THAT HE

SAW NO REASON TO BE COOPERATIVE AS LONG AS TUNISIAN IS QUOTE PLOTTING WITH EGYPT AND THE UNITED STATES TO OVERTHROW HIS REGIME UNQUOTE. AS LATE AS AUGUST 22, CHATTY TOLD INTERNATIONAL PRESS CORRESPONDENT IN TUNIS THAT HE SAW LITTLE CHANCE FOR BREAKTHROUGH ON CONTINENTAL SHELF DELINEATION ISSUE. ALSO, OUR SOURCE'S INFORMANTS IN GOT INTERIOR MINISTRY (MINISTER OF INTERIOR TAHAR BELKHODJA HAS BEEN PRINCIPAL TUNISIAN NEGOTIATOR WITH LARG) WERE UNSURE THAT EARLIER VISIT OF BELKHODJA TO TRIPOLI (SEE TUNIS 5411) WOULD PRODUCE BREAKTHROUGH. OUR SOURCE BELIVED HE HAD SOLID INFORMATION THAT OBJECTIVE OF BOUMEDIENE'S AUGUST 20/21 VISIT TO TRIPOLI (SEE TRIPOLI 1126) WAS TO BRING QADHAFI AROUND AND THAT HE WAS SUCCESSFUL. LIBYAN MINISTER FOR RCC AFFAIRS BEN AMEUR ARRIVED IN TUNIS AUGUST 24 AND ACCORD REPORTED REFTELS WAS SIGNED AND MADE PUBLIC SAME DAY.

2. ACCORDING TO SOURCE'S ANALYSIS OF THIS REPORTED ALGERIAN INTERVENTION, BOUMEDIENE ENCOURAGED QADHAFI TO BE MORE COOPERATIVE IN ORDER TO CAST ALGERIA IN ROLE AS MEDIATOR AND RESOLVER OF DISPUTES IN MAGHREB. BOUMEDIENE WAS SUPPOSEDLY ALSO MOTIVATED BY NEED TO SHORE UP GOA'S LIST PRESTIGE BOTH IN THIRD WORLD COMMUNITY AND ON DOMESTIC FRONT RESULTING FROM ALGERIA'S AGGRESSIVE POLICY IN WESTERN SAHARA. FIRST STEP HAS BEEN ENCOURAGEMENT OF IMPROVED TUNISIAN-LIBYAN RELATIONS. OTHER TUNISIAN SOURCES HAVE INDICATED TO US EXPECATION THAT ALGERIA MAY SOON MAKE DIRECT APPROACH TO GOT FOR IMPROVED RELATIONS.

3. THIS EXPLANATION OF QADHAFI'S REVERSAL OF HIS LONG STANDING POLICY OF REJECTING DELINEATION OF CONTINENTAL SHELF BOUNDARY WITH TUNISIA SEEMS PLAUSIBLE ALTHOUGH THERE IS SOME QUESTION THAT BOUMEDIENE COULD BY HIMSELF SWING SUCH A COMPLETE ABOUT-FACE IN TRIPOLI. EQUALLY PLAUSIBLE IS THEORY CIRCULATING AMONG MANY LOCAL OBSERVERS THAT QADHAFI ACCEDED TO DELINEATION OF BOUNDARY IN ORDER TO GUARD HIS WESTERN FLANK AND GIRD HIS LOINS FOR POSSIBLE EGYPTIAN ONSLAUGHT FROM THE EAST. WE ARE NOT IN POSITION TO JUDGE AUTHENTICITY OF STORY OF

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TUNIS 06066 311013Z

BOUMEDIENE'S DECISIVE ROLE AND WOULD APPRECIATE ASSESSMENTS OF EMBASSIES ALGIERS, CAIRO, AND TRIPOLI. MULCAHY

CONFIDENTIAL

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: INTERVENTION, DISPUTES, CONTINENTAL SHELF
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 31 AUG 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: ShawDG
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976TUNIS06066
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760330-0133
From: TUNIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976081/aaaaafo.tel
Line Count: 110
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 TUNIS 5973, 76 TUNIS 5964
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: ShawDG
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 21 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <21 APR 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <26 AUG 2004 by ShawDG>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: POSSIBLE ALGERIAN ROLE IN TUNISIAN-LIBYAN CONTINENTAL SHELF ACCORD
TAGS: PFOR, TS, LY, AG
To: STATE CAIRO
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006